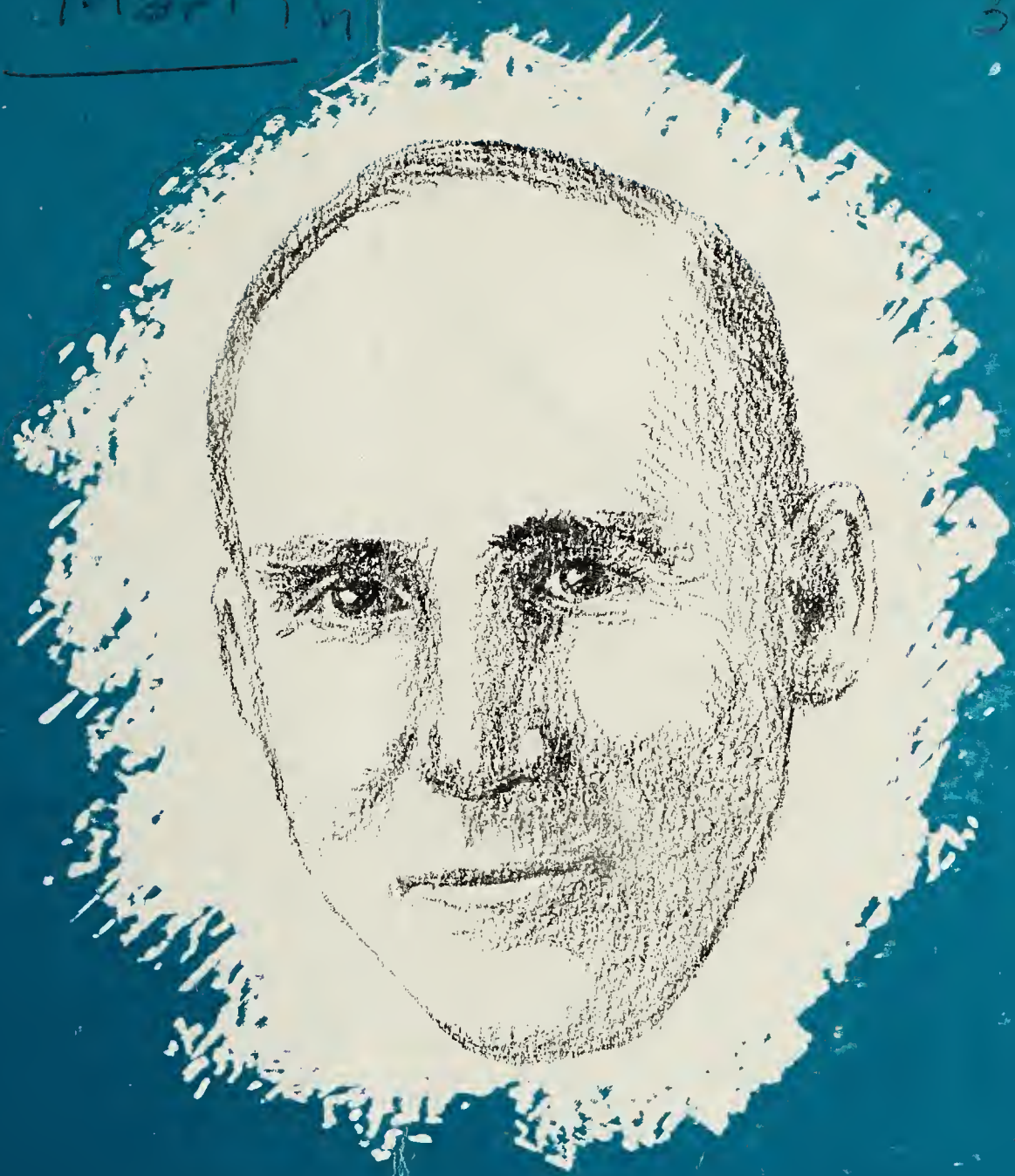


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*MPANDA NSHILA*

# "THE SPLITTER OF PATHS"

THE STORY OF MOTTE MARTIN OF AFRICA

By JOHN MORRISON



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## ***“PATH SPLITTER”***

**I**n May, 1903, the recently-constructed little stern-wheel steamer, the “Samuel N. Lapsley”, fought its way against the strong current of the Congo River. Its destination was the post of Luebo, where a handful of missionaries had been endeavoring to build up, during a decade, an outpost of the Kingdom of God. The “Lapsley” carried an assorted cargo of material useful in this work amongst uncivilized Africans, such as cloth, beads, salt, hoes and other items, things that could be bartered for their services. There was also food and clothing for the missionaries, and a printing press that was to open up a new page in missionary work. There were three missionaries on board, Captain Vass, who had captained the steamer since its construction some two years before, and two new and enthusiastic helpers, H. C. Slaymaker and Motte Martin.

There is a confluence of the Congo and Kasai rivers at a place near Kwamouth. The junction of these two bodies creates a vortex of water, particularly at that period of the year when the Congo waters are low and the Kasai rivers are high, which demands the best that a small steamer can give to pass the spot successfully. Several voyages had been made by Captain Vass before. He had always managed to struggle through slowly and painfully, but the excessive rains at this time had made the river swollen and dangerous.

The missionaries were on deck watching the battle between the stout little steamer and the rushing current and saw the ship move forward by inches. Several times it slipped backwards, but each time Captain Vass edged her round to some other passage where the current seemed less strong. Suddenly, with no warning, the ship turned almost broadside to the current



and capsized, taking with it into the rushing waters the three missionaries and almost forty Africans.

The steamer turned upside down, and Captain Vass, who had been thrown clear, managed, with the help of an African, to clamber on to the hull. Slaymaker, though a strong swimmer, was drowned, and his body was never recovered. Motte Martin, unable to swim a stroke, caught a wicker chair floating by, and was immediately swept away by the current. Although there are crocodiles in this part of the current, he saw none. Some of the Africans, having retrieved the canoe which had been tied to the "Lapsley" but which had fortunately broken loose, were sent by Captain Vass to rescue him, and he was brought back to the capsized boat. His position was still precarious, as was that of Captain Vass. Turned upside-down the "Lapsley" was floating down stream. Those on the hull could feel the smoke-stack grating on the sand and rocks, and there were grave fears that it would turn over again, throwing everyone off. There was only one paddle, but the canoe was considered safer than the hulk of the sinking steamer, so they all climbed into it and rowed slowly to shore. Search was made for Slaymaker and for the 23 Africans who had disappeared, but in vain. The handful of survivors started through the long grass to Kwamouth where a small government post was located, with a lone Belgian in charge, and after 7 hours of walking in the hot sun, they reached it exhausted. They were kindly received and provided for, but both Vass and Martin had fever and had to stay in bed several days.

Motte Martin had started "splitting the path" the hard way, although he was never to shirk any path that would "blaze the trail" for the Master he loved and served. When he told his adventure to the people at Luebo, they dubbed him "Mpanda Nshila", or the "path-splitter", and a better name could not have been chosen, a name that was to become greatly loved by African and missionary.

## **TEXAN**

Motte Martin was born in Marlin, Texas, as the new year was ushered in, and a New Year's gift to his parents became one to Africa, too. That thought was far from the proud father's mind, who, as a judge and lawyer of considerable standing in the community, looked forward with deep satisfaction to the day on which young Motte would take his place as his partner by his side, and subsequently succeed him when he had passed on. Yet man proposes and God disposes.

His mother was a lovely woman, and like so many mothers, planted the seeds of a Christian faith in the child's heart that were to blossom out into rich fruitage.

At 7 years of age Motte entered a private school where he stayed until his 16th year when he entered Austin College in Sherman, Texas. Until that time he had tacitly accepted in his mind the thought of carrying out his father's wish, which had been fostered over many years by suggestion and observation, and of working beside one whom he admired and loved and whom he saw respected and admired and honored even beyond the community in which he lived.

## **CHRISTIAN**

Yet God had other plans for him. The first step was taken in his first year at Austin College where he professed faith in Jesus Christ and was admitted as a member of the Church. Although his father was not a professing Christian, he was an able and open-minded man and let his sons make their own decisions. But as the years passed by and young Motte advanced in Christian knowledge and experience, there was forced gradually upon his mind the conviction that Christ had a place for him that might be contrary to all that he had previously envisaged. It was not easy for him to accept this, for he was reluctant to disappoint his father. In the testing moments that came to him while he was striving to reach a decision there

came the thought that perhaps it was only something of his own imagination, and he wondered if he were really saved. But God was speaking to a sincere, loyal, open and impressionable youth, and Motte's was a heart and mind that always lay open to conviction. Caught between two conflicting loyalties, as he imagined them to be, he studied the Bible more earnestly and prayed more sincerely, and through the illuminating power of God's Spirit was finally convinced that God was calling him to His Service. When he knew this, he made his decision and it was irrevocable.

He came home from College a graduate and, with that quality of refusing to shrink from any unpleasant task that was to make him the great missionary he became, he sought the first opportunity to speak to his father of his call to the ministry and subsequently to the foreign mission field. No one will ever know what hopes were thus shattered in his father's heart, nor what plans suddenly crumbled into nothing. At first his reaction was of anger and frustration. Then he dismissed the idea as a caprice of youth. But as time went on, and Motte spoke of going to the Seminary, and he saw his son in deadly earnest, he became embittered, and laid down the ultimatum that he would pay not a penny of his expenses. It was a painful experience for the young man who loved and esteemed his father so much, but there is a call that transcends all earthly ties, and demands a greater loyalty than even that which is imposed by the love we bear for those dearest to us. Such a call came to Motte Martin and he was not disobedient to the Heavenly vision.

His mother could enter into the son's mind and purpose better than the father, (as mothers have the superlative faculty of doing), for had she not prepared the way? In many a quiet way she helped Motte to achieve his purpose, even to the extent of bringing about a healing of the rift that had developed following the son's decision. Yet never to the day of his death



was the father reconciled to the idea, nor would he assist in any way the further preparation for Motte's life work.

In later years, he used to recount how his mind had first turned to Africa. In reading Livingstone's experience, and then hearing Sheppard, our pioneer missionary in Congo, speak, the conviction had come to him that herein lay his life's work.

He took his seminary course in Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, and during the course of his studies worked in the Y.M.C.A., and later, took charge of several small churches in the vicinity.

On his graduation he was appointed a missionary to Africa, and in May, 1903, sailed with Slaymaker for Congo where he was to spend some 43 years of very fruitful effort.

He came to the Congo at a most opportune time since Dr. Morrison had recently left for a furlough necessitated by a long term of 7 years. The work had not been carried on nor the early successes achieved without cost. He had visited the grave of the pioneer missionary Samuel Lapsley at Underhill, near Matadi, then a little further on the grave of Mrs. Snyder at Kinshasa. A few years previously, Mrs. Adamson had made the supreme sacrifice at Luebo. To add to these evidences of the price of missionary work, his companion and fellow-missionary, Slaymaker, was never destined to see the work to which he had dedicated himself, and his own introduction to his task was to bring him to the very gates of death in the swirling Congo waters. Yet there is no note of pessimism or discouragement in his first letter home when he described the disastrous experience of the sinking of the "Lapsley", but one only of faith in God, as he wrote, "Don't worry about me; I am immortal until my work is done."

## **PRANKSTER**

On Dr. Morrison's departure, the work had been left almost completely in the hands of the colored missionaries, and they

welcomed Martin gladly. Having been brought up as a boy with colored people, he found himself immediately at home, and they worked together in complete harmony. He loved to tell of an amusing incident when he invited all of the missionaries to a surprise dinner at the home of Mr. Henry Hawkins, the only one ignorant of the fact being Hawkins himself. Hawkins was a little late in coming home from work, and on arriving was considerably surprised to see some 9 missionaries sitting in his front room. He sat down and conversation was kept up, one missionary after another injecting something new as soon as the conversation showed signs of flagging. Time passed and Hawkins became visibly uneasy. He had been working hard and wanted his dinner, but the way the talk was being carried on it looked as though dinner might be somewhat delayed. At last he whispered to one of the group, "What are you all here for?" He was obviously taken aback when the whisper came back, "You invited us to dinner." He moved round the circle receiving the same answer. He looked sort of bewildered but finally asked one, "Who gave you the invitation?" and the answer came, "Mr. Martin." Knowing Mr. Martin's propensity for joking, he started moving slowly round the circle to get to him, but Martin kept moving away in the other direction, and the whole group, who were in on the joke, could hardly refrain from bursting out into laughter. Just as it looked as if he might corner Mr. Martin, Mrs. Hawkins came in, and Mr. Hawkins moved over to her and began whispering. She was in the plot, too, and said, rather loudly, "Oh, we can serve up a little soup and crackers." Hawkins, looking very disturbed, walked off to clean up, and when he came back in a few minutes, the guests were seated round the table. He sat down very ill at ease and watched the servant come with a platter of soup, enough to go round. Then, the soup plates cleared off, he found it hard to answer the questions which everyone seemed intent on asking him as he kept looking towards the door by which the servant would enter. At last two small boys came in, one with



a large roast duck, and the other with several dishes. As he watched the boys everyone was watching him and with great difficulty managed to keep straight faces. He looked round the table, but all seemed to be talking nonchalantly. He started to ask a question, but someone always broke in. Then he looked at his wife and the facts of the case burst on him and he started to laugh. He had a deep hearty laugh, and when he started he shook the table. Everybody joined in, and Motte Martin, who had instigated the joke, was more than satisfied with its success. His fine sense of humor served him in good stead during his long years of service.

### ***CHILDREN'S FRIEND***

One of his first activities was the forming of a Sunday School class for children, a work in which he maintained his interest through the years, so much so that the Africans called him "Mulunda wa Bana", "Children's Friend."

No matter what time of day one visited his house, there was always a crowd of children round, white as well as black, and there was always a box of crackers, or candy, or a bunch of bananas for the children of both races. He constructed a special shower-bath for the African children, a very thoughtful and kindly act, since water was brought from a stream up a very steep slope in cans carried on the heads of men and women and was usually not available to the children.

He was always devising some way of amusing the children and they flocked to him. On a visit to the Roman Catholic Mission with Dr. Stixrud, who had been called on a medical emergency, the pupils learned that "Mpanda Nshila" was there, and they swarmed round him full of curiosity! There was a special reason for this. His tremendous popularity with the young of the outstations, whatever their faith, had so annoyed the Roman Catholics that they had inserted into one of their school books a short story warning the children against a little

animal named "Mpanda Nshila", saying he was dangerous to children. Of course, the children soon learned to whom the story referred so when the news spread that Mpanda Nshila had arrived at the Mission they crowded to ask him questions and to find out what he was like. There was no incident in his life that gave him greater amusement, and he often recalled it with a chuckle.

## **HUNTER**

The work that was dearest to his heart was that of the Boys' Home at Luebo. In the early days, when funds were scarce, accommodations limited, and the demands for entrance more than any available space could hold, he was always devising means by which he could squeeze in one more boy. When it came to the question of food, available rations were meager. Then Motte Martin would don his darkest suit of clothes, seize his gun, and with his African attendant, Kahuhu, would set off for the Kampunga forests where monkeys were in abundance. He was usually successful and one could tell the proportion of his success by the amount of singing that came down from the Boys' Home. Sometimes from a distance one could hear the song of the men carrying the monkeys, extolling the virtues in impromptu song of a man who could bring such luxury into their diet.

He went a little further afield one day and allowed his interest in providing for his boys to lead him into what might have been a fatal experience. The people brought word that a fine big hippopotamus was in the habit of wading ashore at night down near the brickyard in order to sample the fields. So with a double purpose in mind, that of protecting the foodstuffs and providing for his boys a good stock of meat, he went down one moonlight night accompanied by his African hunter. He waited a while in the shadow of a tree and saw the huge beast emerge from the water. In order to avoid danger to his com-

panion, he ordered him to stand behind a tree while he himself moved forward into position to shoot. He let the hippo come well out of the water for he was afraid that if he only wounded it, it might return to the river and he would lose it. As it started up the slight incline in the direction where he stood, he fired, and the resultant snort told him he had struck it. He moved out from the shadow to take better aim for another shot, and the movement brought the hippo's attention to him. It started up towards him and his gun jammed. His companion was frantic, screaming at the top of his voice, "Run, Mpanda, run," as if Mpanda could possibly be unaware of a 3 ton animal charging towards him as fast as it could. He ran, and later, in telling of the incident, he added, "That hippo never had a chance when I really got going." The hippo lost him in the shadows and started down towards the river again. Motte got his rifle fixed and began to follow the hippo, but as he started his friend grabbed him by the arm and whispered excitedly, "No, no, no; it will kill you, and what will I say to the judge in court when I am arrested?" Motte started to laugh at his reason for holding back, but he patted the man's arm and went on. The next shot again wounded the hippo and again he had to take flight. By this time his attendant was almost bereft of his senses, wringing his hands and shouting, "Run, run, run," while keeping at a safe distance himself. But a third shot told, and the hippo sank to the ground, mortally wounded. The Boys' Home had a great feed late that night, but the pungent odor of cooked hippopotamus almost made the missionaries abandon Luebo station for a clearer atmosphere.

It would be interesting to know how many boys have passed through that home during Motte Martin's superintendency. They must number in the thousands. Men like Pastor Kalombo, the senior pastor of the Mission, whose life alone would justify all the expense the home has cost; or Pastor Kasongo Paul, leading pastor at Lubondai, both of whom claim to be alumni



of the Luebo Boys' Home, bear eloquent testimony of this great lover of Congo youth, who, though dead, yet speaketh. His proteges may be found in many walks of life today throughout many regions of the Congo, and they say, with a sort of pride, "Meme, nakadi mu luhangu lua Mpanda Nshila," "I am a graduate of Mr. Martin's school."

## **EVANGELIST**

If there was any other work that paralleled the love for the Boys' Home in Motte Martin's life, it was that of evangelism. In his earlier days, he spent long periods away from the station going from village to village, exhorting, advising, evangelizing. Naturally, in the earlier days, there was much of adventure in these trips. On one of these trips with another missionary, they came to a village where they planned to spend the night. There was considerable unrest in the vicinity, and several sporadic revolts had taken place against the authority of the white man while several villages looked on each other with mutual distrust. The chief of this village seemed glad to see them, and they looked for a quiet and successful night there. But as darkness fell, shouts could be heard, and the younger missionary, who had gone for a short walk, came hurrying back saying that there were many men with guns, bows and arrows hiding in the forest. The chief became very uneasy and finally begged them to leave as he said his village was too weak to protect them. He showed them a path by which they might slip off in the darkness, so they quietly gathered their carriers together and darkness having fallen, began to slip out. They traveled a mile or two and began to congratulate themselves on having gotten out of a tight place when suddenly they heard shouts from several directions. In spite of every effort to make haste, they were stopped by a large number of Africans armed to the teeth. "Mpanda" told them they were missionaries. This seemed to make a favorable impression on the leader who was

obviously taken aback, which seemed to indicate that he had been looking for someone else. He was unwilling to believe they were missionaries and asked them numbers of questions. Then a sort of smile came over his face, and he called out the name of one of his men and asked him to find out if they were really missionaries, for, said the chief, "You stayed on the Mission for a long while." The man came forward daubed with white, his "protective" medicine, and with spear in hand. He looked at them and to their amazement and relief asked them to repeat the Lord's prayer in Tshiluba. This was easy. The Lord's prayer has been a source of strength and comfort to many people throughout the ages, but one questions if it has been used to stranger purpose and under stranger circumstances than when its repetition meant a reprieve from death. One might say that there have been few times when the Lord's Prayer has been prayed more distinctly or more earnestly. The chief was satisfied and the armed band even accompanied them for some distance as an escort before sending them on their path with the parting salutation, "Nuaye bimpe", "Travel well."

Not long after the revolt of the Lukengo, the king of the Bakuba tribe, and the subsequent burning of Ibanche station, the king and his people marched on Luebo with the threat of driving every white man across or into the river Lulua. Motte began to think that Africa was living up to expectations, with his baptism in the Congo River, and now a miniature war about to burst on his head, all within the space of a year. His description of the scene as the missionaries awaited the attack shows how well-fitted he was for a life of adventure, which pioneering missionary life undoubtedly is. The Bena Lulua and Baluba flocked in by hundreds to defend the Mission and missionaries. Warriors came with all sorts of arms, some with muzzle-loading guns, some with bows and arrows, some with spears, and some with large ferocious-looking knives or machetes. Some had feathers in their hair, some were daubed with white-

wash, some with red ocher and costumes were of startling variety. Altogether the scene would have made a Wild West picture tame. It was pandemonium as people shouted to each other or sang songs, and the uproar was deafening. "At any rate," Motte writes, "I am sure it was the noise that sent our would-be attackers back", and a few days later he records with a sense of exultation "We are going back to Ibanche; we must go forward."

## **TEACHER**

In 1906 he and DeYampert made a trip in the Bena Lulua country and found many candidates for baptism. They examined over 1,500, finding almost 800 who qualified in their knowledge of the Bible and who seemed to be leading Christian lives. It was the greatest number added on any one trip, and he wrote of it with deep joy. During their journey they saw numbers of people with fetishes tied on their bodies which, they learned, had the power of deflecting the bullets of the white man. When Motte tried to convince them of the foolishness of their belief, they asked him to explain how it was that the witchdoctor could withstand the bullets. He had heard before of the witchdoctor's trickery and had come prepared to expose it. It was the witchdoctor's custom to load a gun, give it to a man, and ask him to fire it at his breast. When the gun was fired the witchdoctor stood unharmed. There was a sort of sleight of hand about it that was not difficult to copy, so Motte took a gun, showed them some fragments of metal in his hand which would serve for bullets and prepared to load. But with a little conversation he managed to distract their attention so that he was able to exchange the bullets for pieces of black chalk which resembled the bullets or slugs. He then rammed the ammunition down the muzzle, set a cap near the trigger, cocked the gun and asked one of the men to fire it at him. They all were afraid and refuse to fire it. When they refused, he



had them catch a goat and said he would pay for it if it were killed. The trick succeeded. With a large crowd looking on, one young man took the gun and pressed the trigger. There was a flash, a noise, the goat "baa-ed" at the noise but remained intact. The people began to edge off but he called to them and said he would explain; that it was only a trick. So he initiated them into the secret and told them the next time the witchdoctor tried to fool them, that they were to ask him to permit the villagers to load the gun and see what the witchdoctor would say. In such ways he gained the confidence and goodwill of the Africans, although undoubtedly he incurred the hostility of the witchdoctor which he was bound to do anyway in the simple proclamation of the Gospel message. The people came to know him as their friend and he was always accessible when something troubled them and they needed advice or help.

In the many itineraries he made to the outlying districts of our mission and beyond, for he was always a pioneer at heart, Martin came to know many proverbs and folklore. Nothing delighted the people more than to have one of their own stories used against them or have some pithy proverb clinch a gospel message. I can remember his using a proverb one day, and I can see the old chiefs, heathen all of them, who sat in the front row, nudge each other as the truth struck home. He was rebuking the people, Christian and non-Christian, for their stingy treatment of God and in warning tones said, "Buiminyi budi butuala nkuasa," or translated into English, "Stinginess carries the chair." One old chief burst into a guffaw of laughter followed by laughter throughout the crowd, showing the shaft had penetrated. Behind that proverb lies the story of one chief visiting another. The chief rode in a sort of saddle, or chair, mounted on long poles and carried on the shoulders of the hammock-carriers, 4 or possibly 8 men. The porters, as they shuffled along, sang a sort of rhythmic chant that could be heard

a long way off. As they neared the village of their destination where they were expected, the men of the village came out to meet them and fought for the honor of carrying the chief. When the visitor prepared to leave the village after several days, he left a "matabisha", or gift. If his gift fell below expectation, his own men carried him out of the village, so that the proverb came into being, "Stinginess carries the chair." Its effective use capped the message of being liberal with God.

Sometimes he carried on his trips a sort of marionette or puppet and by a little manipulation of the fingers he could make it shake its head or nod. It was quite lifelike. When he arrived at a village, the young people crowded round and this was the opportunity he sought. He would take the doll from his trunk, and the people's attention became riveted on it. Then he would ask questions, pertinent questions, amusing questions, that soon drew most of the village to see what the laughter was about. Whatever answer he wanted was easily arranged, but it caused great merriment when some particular leading question was answered by a vigorous shake of the head. One of the amusing dialogues began, especially if there were a number of maidens in his audience, with asking the dummy if he were looking for a wife. The answer was always in the affirmative. Then he would ask if he had enough dowry to pay for a wife, if he wanted a Christian or a heathen girl, if he would be good to her and finally he would point to a maiden and ask if she would satisfy him. When his "Charlie McCarthy" answered with a shake of the head, the bashful maiden would hide her face and the crowd would roar. When he would finally select one, the chosen maiden generally scampered off to the uproarious amusement of the crowd.

### ***COMPANION OF ROYALTY***

When the King and Queen of the Belgians made their visit to the Belgian Congo, Dr. Martin was invited to travel with

them on the train through the Kasai territory and during the trip received the one rebuke that he encountered during his missionary career, and that from Queen Elizabeth herself. In the tropics it is customary and wise to take due precautions against the sun and heat and until recent years, sun helmets were worn by most white people. But Dr. Martin never wore anything but a soft yachting cap with white cover. Queen Elizabeth turned to him and said, "Dr. Martin, do you think that an old missionary like you, and one to whom young ones look as an example, should wear such insufficient headcover in this climate?" Motte was stumped for an answer but not convinced of error, for until the day of his last illness, one could recognize him afar off by his cap alone. He always had a sort of sheepish, boyish grin when the incident was brought up.

However, his personal delinquency in the matter of head-dress did not prevent the Colonial Government from appreciating the magnificent services he rendered the Colony. On three different occasions he was honored, having had bestowed on him the decoration of a "Knight of the Royal Order of the Lion", a "Knight of the Order of Leopold the Second", and the "Medaille Commemorative du Congo."

## **MISSIONARY**

Dr. Martin was always thinking up ways of attracting the people's interest. For quite a number of years his health did not permit him to "go on the road". When the chiefs heard that Mpanda Nshila was out again on one of the last trips he made to the outstation, they came from far and near for some had not seen him for many years. As some of these "ancients" came hobbling along the village street Mpanda would greet the oldest by saying, "Hello, young man." This invariably produced an argument as to who was the older. It tickled them tremendously to match their memories against his and to try to recall incidents that were before his time and they would



chuckle over an advantage gained or some repartee by which he won the argument.

In one of his letters in 1915 he wrote of one of his itinerations where he had traveled beyond the bounds of the Mission area. "I have just returned from a 4-months journey in the "wilds", and my whole caravan of 50 men has come back absolutely intact, a fact for which we prayed definitely as the "medicine-men" had specifically challenged us, saying that we would be beset with ill-luck, for there were long and difficult stretches to be traversed, the way was long and hard, there would be lack of food, and a dearth of water on the plains. The uncertain tempers of hostile tribes would be encountered, and they themselves, the witchdoctors, had made a fetish that would spoil the trip. . . . We were amidst lions that seemed to take their victims at pleasure, now a goat, now a man, for the small grass-covered huts afforded no protection. During the trip various accidents occurred with these old flint-lock guns but no one was injured. No serious sickness happened, despite the fact that, with a score of my men, we shook hands and sat and talked for nearly an hour (my men even going so far as to drink out of the same cup), with a group of men before we knew that the eruptions on their faces and bodies were those of a particularly virulent type of smallpox. No serious difficulties of any kind were encountered although the natives were at war amongst themselves and in rebellion against Government officials in the area through which we passed. On one occasion, we were in the rout that followed a battle, and met some of the returning warriors carrying heads on a number of poles, in triumph. With all this in mind, do you not think I have good cause for my constantly increasing faith in prayer?"

Yes, he had great faith in prayer as was constantly evidenced in his life. He had a personal helper, a hunter, named Kahuhu, who, in spite of Mpanda's entreaties, seemed unable to overcome the lust for smoking hemp, a drug that drives the

smoker crazy. He finally made a prayer-compact with Kahuhu, who was a weak struggler after Christianity, and like Jacob of old, the two prevailed with God. It was a real test for hemp makes a slave of a man, but he saw the day when Kahuhu was accepted into the Church and he could say, "Thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

When the depression of the early thirties came, the missionaries stood aghast before a reduction in the appropriation which, with the loss in the exchange, meant a "cut" of almost 75%. As their salaries had been arbitrarily cut by 35%, help from that source was reduced also.

When it came to closing the doors of institutions that were thriving, the real test came, and Motte Martin was the first to suggest that his department be eliminated from the small budget allowance believing that God would provide in some way. While the work was reduced, the door of the Boy's Home was never closed and until conditions returned to normality his personal funds, as well as personal gifts, went to maintain the work so dear to him. There was nothing that could have given him greater joy than giving all he had to that work, and during these trying years, while costs were reduced to a minimum. "Luhangu lua Mpanda Nshila" was a going concern.

In his repeated trips to the outlying villages, often untouched by any evangelistic effort, his heart was saddened at the sight of so many sick without medical attention of any kind. So on one of his trips he took the top medical assistant, a boy named Ngoi, with him. They did a great work with the little they had, so much so that Mpanda was considerably surprised when a delegation of old men came to complain about Ngoi saying he wouldn't give them the medicine they needed. He called Ngoi and asked him why he wouldn't give them the medicine. Ngoi, very indignant and without any sense of humor, said they wanted medicine to make them young again and that when he had told them he didn't have any medicine of that



kind, they called him a liar and said they would get him in trouble with the white man. Yes, they believed that Mpanda Nshila could even make them young again.

The most trying experiences of his missionary life lay in the fact that he was separated from his family for the greater part of his long service of 43 years. Mrs. Martin's health was unsuited for the rigors of a tropical climate which exploits one's physical weaknesses so that except for several short terms, she was unable to be with him. Yet in many ways she contributed to his work even if she were denied the joy of sharing it with him in Congo itself. He was not a man to wear his heart on his sleeve but when the mail came in those closest to him could mark the eagerness with which he opened his letters and the depth of his love for the family from which his consecrated task separated him. When photos came he shared them with those who formed the missionary family. It is one of the trials of missionary life that one has to sever the dearest ties that bind. Motte Martin had more than his share of this, as had his wife and son, but he never counted self in his love for Christ and the people to whom he had gone to make Christ known. When his last illness laid hold of him so suddenly and it became apparent that his condition was serious, the village stopped almost all activity. As one leader remarked of that large African village of some 11,000 people, "No one has the heart to do anything; we can't go to our fields; we sit and talk, and pray, and hope that God will give him back to us." Yet it was not to be. Almost the last message he sent back to the village was in reply to the one that came to him that the whole village was praying for him. He said, "Tell them not to pray for me, for God will do what is best. But tell them to pray for themselves and for each other."

On the day he died, the village was stunned and crowds gathered round the house in which he lay. The news of his death, (at 6 a.m., on Sunday, September 15, 1946), came as some-



thing that they could hardly comprehend. In the house where his body lay, pastors, elders and old Congo friends gathered to sit beside him and look at him. They seemed unable to take it in that he had gone. His old cook and helper, Bukasa Daniel, who had been with him during the whole 43 years of his service, could only gaze at him with tears in his eyes, unable to realize that his friend, "Mpanda", had left him.

His body was laid in the large church at Luebo, and thousands of people streamed past all day to have a last look at their friend. In the evening he was laid to rest in the small cemetery, thus fulfilling his oft-expressed wish to have his body laid where his heart had ever been.

The whole community honored him at his death as they had during his life. The Government sent a contingent of soldiers to give him burial with full military honors and Government officials from all around, traders and merchants and thousands of Africans gathered round the grave to listen to the simple service in the African language. The closing prayer was offered by Pastor Kalombo Daniel, grey and worn in the service and fellow-disciple of Christ. As I walked away from the grave with the Chief Administrative officer of the district, he said, "What a lovely prayer! How they must have loved him!" Could there be any better requiem? "How they must have loved him."

On his 40th year of service in the Congo, the fellow missionaries of Motte Martin honored him with a gift in ivory and ebony and one missionary wrote the following verse which expressed the thoughts of all and are surely fulfilled in their closing lines now:—

Columbus sailed the angry seas in fourteen-ninety-two.  
And Lindbergh dodged through fleecy clouds up in the azure  
blue,  
For pioneers are timeless men, and come with every age,  
And history writes their prowess fine on many a golden page.

Thus some have scaled the mountain heights and others braved  
the deep,

Or gone to strange and foreign lands where life was very cheap.  
And some have sought for riches great, while others sought for  
fame;

And some have died a lonely death, and no one knew their name.

But there has been another band, their names are wrought in  
gold;

They sought no fame, nor wealth, nor power, and yet were  
no less bold

Than those the glittering prize lured on. They came without  
a thought

Of gain for self, or rank, or gold; the happiness they sought  
Was not their own, alone. They saw the multitude's despair,  
Their ignorance, their misery; and God, who called them there,  
Became their one sure source of power, a light in darkness drear;  
And men, and lands, and tribes were changed from hopelessness  
and fear.

Just forty years ago he came, how quick the time flies by!  
It isn't much as marked by men, but much when marked on high.  
It's written large in lives of men, in boys and girls grown old.  
'Tis writ through all eternity, when all the stars are cold.

And one day in that bright beyond, when tribes and nations  
throng,

They'll be a multitude around their voices one grand song,  
And eyes will shine and faces smile, when someone strolls their  
way,

For Mpanda's word, and Mpanda's life, ensured their place that  
day.





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